entirely as the husband's own. If the mother runs away with a man -- which sometimes happens -- without taking the child along, it is fed by the grandmother whose name it also usually bears if it is a girl. It is by no means a disgrace for the girl if her sexual relations with young men have consequences.

3. Marriage

We have already seen that sexual intercourse within blood relationship is taboo (<u>shi</u>). Such relationship includes:

1. one's own familial group;
2. the mother's familial group;
3. the familial group of the father's mother.

Formerly this taboo was observed by all Pangwe with uniform strictness, but today it is frequently circumvented. The Jaunde do not always observe it, and the Fang -- of all people, the Fang with their constantly emphasized <u>onon</u> -- have dropped it for the own familial group, but retain it for the other familial groups. To the Ntum and all the other Pangwe this shocking occurrence has been a great irritant, and they never let an opportunity pass of making fun of the immorality of the Fang who "cohabit with their own sisters" or of speaking indignantly about it, without failing at the same time to stress their own great respect for morality and decency. This is done despite the fact that the Ntum themselves have at least in part been corrupted by the bad example of the Fang, and in other respects, too, transgressions against the taboo are not infrequent. The custom of having sexual relations with women of one's own kin group (sisters in the Pangwe sense) is called <u>zămaduju</u> III or simply <u>zăma</u> III, the verb being a <u>dulu zăma</u>. As can be seen by the prefix class, the name has been derived entirely unchanged from the name for God (<u>zăma</u>) and signifies "to act like Sama," because, as can be seen from the creation story (Vol. II, p. 16 ff. /Ed., not translated/), Sama (Nsambe) had sexual intercourse with his own sister.

Where <u>zămaduju</u> is still taboo, a payment must be made to the girl's father in case of a violation. The payment varies depending upon the gravity of the offense: a number of goats

(formerly it was commonly five goats), as well as a dog which serves as scapegoat, that is, the dog is supposed to take upon itself the disease with which the sinner is threatened by the cult spirit. If disease nonetheless occurs, medicines which are connected with the cults are prepared (see medicines for cult sicknesses, Vol. II, p. 36).

The modern, freer conception or -- among the Fang -- the denial of the taboo against intercourse with blood relatives (in the Pangwe sense) disappears as soon as there is a question of marriage. Then the taboo is in force everywhere and without qualifications. /260/

Free intercourse between the young man and the girl is, in many cases, only a shorter or longer testing period which, if the result of the "test" -- in this case a physical one, as contrasted to the spiritual one of which we spoke above -- is favorable, leads to marriage. If the girl is very much in love with her friend, to use a Pahgwe expression, he can readily persuade her to follow him immediately to his village. Such an "abduction" is considered -- partly, at least -- to be sanctified by custom, even if the bride's family is usually not overjoyed at the practice. In such a case, the girl's father will set out the next day to demand the purchase price from his son-in-law. If the latter is able to pay him a part, say, half of this price, the matter is settled, and the balance is usually put on a buy-now-pay-later basis. If it turns out, however, that the "abducter" is a poor beggar or that his father does not want to produce the money, the bride is mercilessly taken away from him again even if she pours out streams of tears. You simply cannot get something for nothing. In the majority of cases, however, the girl will not agree to run away with her lover; instead she will demand that her suitor ask her father for her hand in marriage and first make a payment.

Every woman, young or old, has the same value. Nonetheless, the amount of the purchase price fluctuates greatly in accordance with general economic conditions. A woman is cheapest among the Jaunde and she is most expensive in the heart of Pangwe country. The price fluctuates between 200 and 750 marks (in our money. On the average, one can assume a price of

34F circumcision was public, and the woman to whom it was done under-
68I went the gibes and insults of all the inhabitants.

The life of the young people is the same as that of the adults. The
823 virginity of a woman is considered unimportant and the Fan have
836 sexual relations from the time they are capable of cohabitation. When
848 a young girl has a child, it belongs to her parents, from whom the child acquires wealth; there is no search for the father and the young girl keeps all the respect which she enjoyed. Young girls are free to give themselves to whomever they please. This very broad morality, [812] however, has one important qualification in that there are, so to speak, no young girls, the little girls having been married off by their parents very early, sometimes even before their birth.

582 Marriage (aĺuŋ). Men rarely marry before the age of twenty years, and usually later, because they do not have the means to pay the dowry for taking a wife.

582 Exogamy is always practiced because marriage between people of
•835 the same tribe is sterile. Marriage between cousins is forbidden up to the third generation and in general, marriage is forbidden between persons linked by any kind of kinship; in this case there is also pro- [808] hibition of sexual relations. No penalty is prescribed for infraction, but the guilty ones will fall ill and their children, if they have any, will not live.

582 Occasionally there are instances when marriage between relatives
783 is authorized, but only after the practitioner has removed the pro-
835 hibition by the process [88] called abvule minsem. The practitioner goes to find some termite earth (nguregę), a plant (mekaga), and a vine (nyola dzik); the plant and vine are folded and placed in an etok [845] (a container of banana leaves) full of water. The termite earth is placed on a nzum (see the description in the section on conception) and the etok is placed underneath. The two kinsmen who want to marry also stand underneath it, while the practitioner climbs onto the nzum, dips the leaves in the etok, and says, "nseme ose mi waga bo e wo ma ya yūi" (I remove every prohibition that you have made). He hits the termite earth with the leaves and then takes the etok and pours the contents onto the heads of the two people from whom he is removing the prohibition. With the remainder, the man and woman each takes a washing.

583 A man who has not enough dowry but who finds a young girl eager to marry him may take her away in the night; when the parents come

G. Balandier--35 E-6 (1946-1951) 1955 FH9 Fang FH9

168 the social and cultural organizations are directly blamed: the
186 breaking up and dispersal of the groupings resulting in the rupture
of fundamental interdictions (especially that of exogamy: with the
• 339 present confusion each man risks marrying his "sister" and being
condemned to a sterile union); the abandonment of traditional
religious observances, especially the Bîéri worship rendered to
F69 ancestors -- so that the Bîéri "revenges" itself, "according to cer-
842 tain informants, by making the women sterile. Borrowing from
European civilization and from their neighbors has altered "Fang
manners" and resulted in behavior that is not valid for the Fang
and puts their social existence in danger. These are the principal
reasons brought forth. We have already in this chapter paid par-
ticular attention to these facts, because they show the subjective
aspect of the demographic crisis and how much the search for
fertility and for power, both linked together, still plays a part in
the present reactions of this people, how it takes effect in an
ambiguous manner by having recourse at the same time to modern
foreign methods and to traditional Fang methods. For the Fang
villagers the crisis is the most serious consequence of a situation
created by colonization -- by "civilization," as some of them
curiously say. This is sufficient indication that these facts must
be integrated in the whole we have undertaken to analyze.

[101] III. The Type of Social Structure (1)

1. A study carried out with the help of documents collected especially among the Fang of the Woleu-N'Tem, and principally in Oyem region where Fang vitality is the most authentic.

Tribes, Clans, and Lineages

596 The recent clan renewal to which we have often referred has shown the still fundamental importance of the groupings established as a function of "kinship." This was immediately grasped by the first observers and administrators of the Fang country, who insisted on the "family" nature of the Pahouin groupings and came to the

5: Balandier--69 E-5 (1946-1951) 1955 FH19 Fang FH19

562 compensation, or she may "publicly curse her husband." (2)
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2. Cf. V. Largeau, op. cit., article: Femme [Woman].

562 Finally, in the case of serious conflicts, the union may be dissolved
586 by "divorce," but the latter may only be used traditionally under well-defined circumstances and "with the assent of the two interested family heads." (3) There are therefore arrangements that allow

3. L. Mba, op. cit., p. 21.

personal reasons to be taken into account and which P. Meyer had in mind when he said, "the Fang woman can in no way be compared to a slave," because of the many kinds of recourse she has at her disposal; these arrangements play a wholly exceptional role in ancient Fang society. Beside the personal element, which also acts as a disturbing element, is the fact that the number of unions indicates wealth and social importance. (4) It results, when the

4. This element is shown particularly in the custom reported by L. Mba: "In comfortably off families, the parents betroth the boys before puberty and the girls after puberty," op. cit., p. 14.

circulation of goods is no longer strictly controlled, in keen competition and numerous disputes.

582 It is now essential to consider the persons concerned in the
● 835 play of marriage and to point out at once that certain persons [127] are excluded from it. Apart from the double exogamy which introduces a form of "fraternity" in a very broad sense of the word, there are prohibitions concerning the precise degrees of relationship as follows: between members of the taka class (father, mother, uncle, aunt) and the mwanō class (sons and daughters, nephews and nieces); between members of the same segment, including cousins to the third generation; there are prohibitions on those

related by marriage: between a man and "any woman, even divorced, of his kinship by marriage," between "members of the son-in-law's family" and any woman divorced from the kinship by marriage. (1) There are also prohibitions relating to the

1. Cf. L. Mba, op. cit., p. 17.

"adopted" (mobô). It seems important to us to state that these various interdicts exclude from marriage persons between whom there are already very definite relations, those due to effective kinship (including "cousins" to the level where the ndô bôt is most often split into separate elements), those that exist between groupings already related by marriage, and those which arise from the state known as "adoption." Everything takes place as if the aim sought by means of marriage was to impose an alliance on the most foreign elements -- foreign and hostile being considered as synonymous during the period of conquest. (2) The

2. Cf. E. Trezenem, op. cit., pp. 91-92: "Relations with foreign tribes are rare ... the foreigner is accepted with reserve and only when he shows merchandise proving that his visit has no other purpose than to fetch a woman whom he can marry. The tribes are very frequently hostile to one another..."

obligation to respect both double exogamy and the above-mentioned interdicts contributes essentially to broadening among the groupings the field of relations based on co-operation. Incest, an infraction of these principles, enters into the category of the nsem defined by Martrou as "ritual impurity, moral defilement." It brings about sterility or illness and arouses in traditional society a collective reaction. V. Largeau in his work mentions the process of expiation (3) in use at that time with the intervention of the

3. Op. cit., article: Inceste [Incest].

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789

"men's society" and the rite allied to the makuma dance characteristic of this society.

Marriage creates the so-called "restricted" or "individual" family. This has no special name and represents the smallest grouping in which communal life takes place. The husband and wife are nsumû and nga to each other -- these two terms stressing the biological character of the union since they also signify male and female. His parents-in-law are minki [128] or nkia, "he who has received the bride price," a word recalling the seal that has validated the union. In the same way the term mbôm, meaning "newly married woman whose bride price has just been paid," is used to designate the daughter-in-law, and has the same context. The principle already mentioned of the pre-eminence attached to seniority subsists in the relations with the abê. For the husband the wife's eldest sister is minki (mother-in-law) while the younger sister is ngôm nam (my daughter). On a similar pre-eminence is based the authority of the first wife over the other wives; while the former is nanû (mother) the others are mbôm (daughter-in-law) -- which explains her role of directing the various jobs and moral responsibilities entrusted to her. Finally, the personal element at the level of these relations is perfectly symbolized by the position accorded to the preferred wife (nluga or nfômba). This astonished one of the first administrators of the Fang country, who wrote: "While they usually profess great indifference toward their wives and have no scruples over renting or lending them out, they have a rather keen affection for the companion whom they choose as 'favorite.'" (1) This is the least socialized part and manifests re-

1. Archives for the Year 1905, Libreville.

lations that have a certain spontaneity between the two elements associated by marriage.

Residential Units

621 The colonial government has acknowledged only a "collection" of villages in the Fang country, giving this name to the